

# VAMC Saint Louis University Mental Status Examination

## Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. Can I give cues in the memory recall in item 7?** No, this memory recall test is free of cues because it is intended to measure delayed recall.
- 2. How many times can I repeat the 5 objects to the patient in item 4?** Maximum three times if the patient needs help to memorize the objects.
- 3. In item 5, if the patient gives a wrong answer to the first question but answered the second correctly (i.e. if the answer is \$56 spent and \$44 left instead of the right answer, \$23 spent and \$77 left). How would I score this item?** If this is the case, give the patient two points for the second part of the item.
- 4. If patient names a specific animal category before listing specific animal names in that category, would I count the animal categories and specific animal names all together or individually?** No, do not count the animal category. Count only the specific animal names.
- 5. May I draw the clock face in a larger scale?** Yes, this will benefit the patient with visual impairment.
- 6. In item 11, if patient answers Chicago as the state she lived in instead of IL, how do I score this?** The answer of Chicago as the state she lives in gets no credit but you may prompt them once by repeating the question.
- 7. How effective is the SLUMS in measuring Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) and Dementia compared to other instruments (i.e. Mini-Mental Status Examination, MMSE)?** The SLUMS is more specific than the MMSE in detecting Mild Cognitive Impairment.

### Sensitivity to detect MCI according to the area under the curve (AUC) analysis<sup>1</sup>

Education	Less than HS		More than HS	
Instrument	MMSE	SLUMS	MMSE	SLUMS
AUC (Sensitivity)	67%	93%	64%	94%

- 8. After the patients answer, do I give them the right answer?** No, this will be a distraction for the examinee. You can tell the patient that you will answer his/her questions after the test is finished.
- 9. What are we measuring in each SLUMS item? How is this related to dementia and MCI?**
  - Q1-Q3: Attention, Immediate Recall, and Orientation.
  - Q4 & Q7: Delayed Recall with Interference.
  - Q5: Numeric Calculation and Registration.
  - Q6: Immediate Recall with Interference (time constraint).
  - Q8: Registration and Digit Span.
  - Q9: Visual Spatial and Executive Function.
  - Q10: Visual Spatial.
  - Q11: Executive Function plus Extrapolation.

<sup>1</sup> Tariq SH, Tumosa N, Chibnall JT, Perry HM III, and Morley JE. The Saint Louis University Mental Status (SLUMS) Examination for Detecting Mild Cognitive Impairment and Dementia is more sensitive than the Mini-Mental Status Examination (MMSE) – A pilot study. Am J Geriatr Psychiatry. 2006; 14:900-910